

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-10 ADP-00 SS-14 PM-03 NSC-10 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

PRS-01 AID-10 DPW-01 IO-03 ACDA-10 RSR-01 EB-03 SR-02

ORM-01 /094 W

----- 016623

O R 061135Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5594

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

/USDAO SAIGON AOSOP-OR

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 SAIGON 14159

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: SITREP

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE
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EMBASSY AS OF 1800 AUGUST 6, AND COVERS THE PERIOD SINCE THE

LAST SITREP AUGUST 3.

SUMMARY

THE 50 CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS REPORTED IN MR 1 IS HIGHER THAN THE RATE OVER RECENT WEEKS, BUT THE MAJORITY WERE CONCENTRATED IN QUANG NAM PROVINCE AND REPRESENT STIFFER PRG RESISTANCE TO GVN CLEARING OPERATIONS. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OR LOCUS OF INCIDENTS IN MR 2 - WHICH ARE STILL CONCENTRATED IN NORTHERN BINH DINH AND KONTUM. CONGEN REGARDS THEIR SERIOUSNESS. AS REFLECTED BY NVA/VC WILLINGNESS TO TAKE HEAVY CASUALTIES, AS INCREASED AFTER A LULL THE WAR HEATED UP OVER THE WEEKEND IN MR3, WHERE 76 CLASHES WERE REPORTED. MR 3 CG HAS MOVED A NEW REGIMENT INTO THE SPEARHEAD POSITION ON ROUTE 1 A AND STATES HE WILL RESUME THE ROUTE CLEARING OPERATION AND PUSH ON FROM PHU GIAO TO DONG ZOAI. IN MR4, VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS CONTINUED AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME LEVEL. PROV REP REPORTS INCIDENTS IN KIEN HOA PROVINCE AT THEIR LOWEST SINCE JANUARY, WITH CONTINUTIN GVN CONSOLIDATION AND PRESSURE ON VC MINI-BASE AREAS.

PART I

THE JCRC OFF-SHORE CASUALTY RESOLUTION OPERATION IN THE HUE-DANANG AREA IS HALFWAY THROUGH ITS SIX-WEEK TRIAL PERIOD. SO FAR SOME 28 SQUARE MILES OF SEA HAVE BEEN SEARCHED, 56 DIVES HAVE BEEN MADE AND FIVE AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN FOUND. HOWEVER, NONE OF THE SPECIFIC AIRCRAFT BEING SOUGHT HAS YET BEEN LOCATED.

PART II HANOI ESCALATES RHETORIC ON JEC IMPASSE

HANOI'S ANGER OVER WHAT IT CHARACTERIZES AS US DELAYING TACTICS IN THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION'S NEGOTIATIONS WAS REFLECTED IN AN AUGUST 5 COMMENTARY IN THE AUTHORITATIVE PARTY ORGAN NHAN DAN. THE COMMENTARY CLAIMED THAT THE US "HAD TO AGREE WITH THE DRV ON THE AMOUNT OF MONEY AND THE MANNER IN WHICH IT IS TO BE USED FOR A 5-YEAR PROGRAM AND A FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM WHEREBY THE US AGREED TO CONTRIBUTE TO HEALING THE WOUNDS OF WAR AND TO POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION IN THE DRV." HOWEVER, IT CHARGED, "THE US HAS

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SYSTEMATICALLY POSTPONED THE SIGNING OF THE POINTS AGREED UPON." THE COMMENTARY REVEALED THAT THE US POSITION WAS BASED UPON ALLEGED NORTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS'S PROVISIONS ON LAOS AND, PARTICULARLY, CAMBODIA. NHAN DAN STATED THAT THIS REASONING IS "UNFOUNDED" AND THAT TO "LINK THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 21 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM WITH THE SITUATION ELSEWHERE" IS "EXTREMELY ILLOGICAL." WHILE NOT DENYING THE US CHARGES DIRECTLY, THE COMMENTARY WENT ON TO CLAIM

THAT IT IS THE US HIGH HAD "GROSSLY VIOLATED ARTICLE 20" OF THE AGREEMENT THROUGH ITS "EXTERMINATION BOMBING" IN CAMBODIA AND ITS STEPPED UP AID TO THE GKR. THE COMMENTARY ALSO CONDEMNED RADM MCCAULEY'S CHARGES ON AUGUST 4 THAT THE DRV HAD IMPEDED MINE CLEARING OPERATIONS AND REPEATED EARLIER DEMANDS THAT THE US REMOVE DEACTIVATED MINES AND PROVIDE THE DRV WITH "ADEQUATE FACILITIES" TO SWEEP INLAND WATERWAYS.

PART III MR 1

1. MR 1 REPORTS FIFTEEN CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS ON AUGUST 3 AND FOURTEEN VIOLATIONS ON AUGUST 4. ON AUGUST 6 THERE WERE TWENTY-ONE CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS. TWO THOUSAND-ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE ARTILLERY ROUNDS WERE FIRED SOUTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, ALL IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE WHERE ALL BUT TWO OF THE CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS OCCURRED. MOST OF THESE VIOLATIONS WERE CONCENTRATED IN SON TINH DISTRICT AND REPRESENT AN INCREASINGLY STIFFER PRG RESISTANCE TO GVN CLEARING EFFORTS. GVN CASUALTIES FOR THE PERIOD WERE 24 KIA, AND 137 WIA; NVA/PRG CASUALTIES, 64 KIA.

2. COLONEL KARSANO, DEPARTING INDO DEL HEAD STATED THAT HE BELIEVED HE HAD COME CLOSE TO ARRANGING A MEETING BETWEEN THE INDO DEL AND THE PRG UNIT WEST OF FIREBASE BASTOGNE WHICH MIGHT HAVE ENABLED THE ICCS TO PLANT THE FLAG BETWEEN OPPOSING FORCES IN AT LEAST ONE AREA OF THE WESTERN FLANK. IT WOULD BE UP TO COLONEL MORGUITO, HIS SUCCESSOR, TO FOLLOW UP ON HIS OVERTURES.

PART IV MR 2

1. HOSTILITIES IN MR 2 CONTINUED OVER WEEKEND AT ROUGHLY SAME LEVEL AS IN RECENT DAYS: 35 INCIDENTS REPORTED OVER LAST 72-HOUR PERIOD. ABOUT HALF OF THE TOTAL WERE LISTED AS ENEMY ATTACKS BY FIRE. TYPICALLY, ACTION WAS CONCENTRATED IN KONTUM AND IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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THREE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF BINH DINH. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO APPRECIABLE CHANGE IN LOCUS OR NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OVER THE PERIOD, THEIR SERIOUSNESS, AS REFLECTED BY NVA/VC WILLINGNESS TO TAKE HEAVY CASUALTIES, INCREASED. CASUALTY AGGREGATES: NVA/VC 54 KIA, FOUR CAPTURED; RVNAF: 13 KIA, 65 WIA, AND SIX MIA. VNAF TACAIR STRIKES CONTINUED UNABATED OVER THE PERIOD IN KONTUM AND BINH DINH-YW MISSIONS WERE FLOWN IN KONTUM ALONE ON AUGUST 3.

2. FOUR ENEMY ATTACKS ON RANGER UNITS SITUATED NEAR THE LY THAI LOI RANGER CAMP IN NORTHERN THANH AN DISTRICT, PLEIKU, ON AUGUST 4 AND 5 SUGGEST POSSIBLE COMMUNIST DESIGNS IN THAT AREA. THE ATTACKS RESULTED IN INTENSE FIGHTING, BUT RANGERS REPORTEDLY GAVE MORE THAN THEY RECEIVED: ATTACKERS INCURRED 27 KIA OPPOSED TO ONLY TWO RANGER KIA AND THREE WIA. MR 2 COMMANDER THINKS

THIS ENEMY ACTION IN NORTHERN PLEIKU MAY BE IN RETALIATION FOR RVNAF COUNTEROFFENSIVE IN TRUNG NGHIA AREA OF KONTUM. PERHAPS IN ANTICIPATION OF SUCH AN ENEMY THRUST, RANGER UNITS BROUGHT INTO THEIR CAMP FROM THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE 232 FAMILIES (680 PEOPLE) ON AUGUST 5.

3. CONTINUING RVNAF ATTEMPTS TO RETAKE TRUNG NGHIA AND POLI KRONG (WEST OF KONTUM CITY) SINCE NVA OCCUPIED THEM ON JUNE 8 HAVE MADE THIS ENGAGEMENT THE LONGEST BATTLE IN MR 2 SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE WENT INTO EFFECT. DESPITE OCCASIONAL SHORTAGES OF ARTILLERY AMMUNITION AND POL, RVNAF FORCES HAVE BEEN GENERALLY WELL SUPPLIED IN THESE CATEGORIES, AND HAVE FIRED A DAILY AVERAGE OF ABOUT 1,500 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY. RVNAF GAINS, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN NEGLIGIBLE, AND THE COST IN CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES HAS BEEN HIGH. DURING FOUR WEEKS ENDING JULY 29, THE 23RD DIVISION LOST 106 KILLED AND 396 WOUNDED, AND SEVEN M-41 TANKS. ENEMY FORCES MAKE FREQUENT SORTIES FROM THEIR WELL-BUNKERED POSITIONS, AND HAVE SO FAR BEEN ABLE TO RESIST RVNAF GROUND, ARTILLERY AND AIR ASSAULTS. KONTUM POLOFF REPORTS SOME EVIDENCE THAT FRIENDLY REDEPLOYMENT MAY TAKE PLACE UNDER THE CONTINUING HEAVY AIR COVER, AND HE EXPECTS RENEWED GROUND ASSAULTS TO FOLLOW SOON.

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ORM-01 /094 W

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R 061135Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5595

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMDTSSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AXLMBASSY WARSAW 1143
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
CINCPAC
CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE
USDAO/SAIGON/AOSOP-OR
USDEL FPJMOUSAIGON

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LIMDIS

4. BRIG. GENERAL CAM, 23 RD DIVISION COMMANDER, INDICATED A LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THE EFFORT WHEN HE TOLD THE CONSUL AT KNOTUM IN EARLY JULY THAT HE DID NOT THINK THE RECAPTURE OF THE AREA WAS WORTH THE COST IN MILITARY COIN, BUT THAT SAIGON HAD MADE THE BATTLE A POLITICAL TEST OF WILL WHICH MUST BE WON. HIS TROOPERS' MORALE, BUFFETED BY SIGNIFICANT CASUALTIES AND INFREQUENT ROTATION IN A SO-FAR UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT, HAS FURTHER SUFFERED FROM
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LACK OF ADEQUATE RATIONS. AT LEAST ONE UNIT REPORTEDLY HAS GONE WITHOUT FOOD FOR A DAY OR TWO ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION. IF HEAVY GROUND ACTION RESUMES AFTER THE CURRENT AIR CAMPAIGN, ARVN MORALE COULD BE SEVERELY TESTED.

5. NHA TRANG'S ECONOMY, DEPRESSED BY THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF LAST YEAR'S SPRING OFFENSIVE, WITHDRAWAL OF ALLIED TROOPS, AND RECENT IMPOSITION OF THE VAT, CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE RAPID INFLATION. IN PAST WEEK, US LONG-GRAIN RICE HAS CLIMBED FROM 15,000 TO 18,000 PIASTERS PER 100 KILOS AND THE PRICE OF OTHER VARIETIES HAVE RISEN SIMILARLY. PRICE OF GASOLINE APPEARS READY TO JUMP: PUMPS IN NHA TRANG WERE CLOSED AUGUST 6 VENDORS REFUSED TO SELL PENDING OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF A PRICE HIKE.

PART V MR 3

1. WAR HEATED UP OVER THE WEEKEND IN MR 3. DURING 72-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0800 AUGUST 6 THERE WERE 76 CLASHES REPORTED BY MR 3 G-2. INCLUDING 66 GROUND ATTACKS, 33 ATTACKS BY FIRE, AND ONE RAIL INTERDICTION IN BIEN HOA PROVINCE. (AM ENGINE WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED AND 80 METERS OF TRACK DESTROYED.) GVN LOSSES WERE 16 KILLED, 67 WOUNDED (13 CIVILIANS), AND FIVE MISSING. COMMUNIST LOSSES FOR THE SAME PERIOD WERE 58 KIA, TWO CAPTURED. AT MR 3 WEEKLY BRIEFING MORNING AUGUST 6, G-3 REPORTED THAT 15 TRUCKS HAD ARRIVED IN PHUOC BINH LATE AFTERNOON AUGUST 4

WITH SOME 150 TONS OF RICE. MR 3 G-2 STATED THAT THE ORIGIN OF THIS CONVOY WAS BAN ME THUOT.

2. MR 3 CG LTG MINH TOLD CONGEN MORNING AUGUST 6 THAT SITUATION ALONG INTERPROVINCIAL ROUTE 1-A HAS QUIETED DOWN SINCE LAST WEEK'S BATTLE WHICH OPENED 1-A BETWEEN PHU CUONG AND PHU GIAO, BUT HE INTENDS TO CONTINUE UNTIL THE PHU GIAO - DONG ZOAI PORTION IS ALSO OPEN. 7TH REGIMENT OF 5TH DIVISION HAS NOW BECOME SPEAR-HEAD OF THIS PART OF OPERATION, REPLACING THE BATTERED 9TH.

3. MINISTRY OF ECONOMY WEEKEND ANNOUNCEMENT OF INCREASES OF OFFICIAL PRICES OF GASOLINE, KEROSENE, AND SUGAR, PROVIDED IMMEDIATE REGION-WIDE REACTION, WITH MANY GAS STATIONS CLOSING AND SUGAR DISAPPEARING FROM THE MARKETS. BY MORNING AUGUST 6 MARKET HAD SETTLED DOWN A BIT. IN MOST PROVINCES SOME GAS STATIONS ARE

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OPEN, BUT MOST OF THESE ARE SELLING ONLY SUPER GRADE GAS, FOR MORE THAN THE NEW OFFICIAL PRICE. ALTHOUGH ITS OFFICIAL PRICE HAS NOT CHANGED, RICE HAS REPORTEDLY INCREASED 1200 - 2000 \$VN PER 100 KILO BAG.

PART VI MR 4

1. FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 29 AUGUS 4, MR 4 REPORTS A SLIGHT DECREASE IN VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS TO 239 (PREVIOUS WEEK 252), INCLUDING 22 GROUND ATTACKS, 164 BY FIRE, 51 SABOTAGE INCIDENTS, 51 INFILTRATION INCIDENTS, AND 36 HARASSMENTS. 145 OF THE 239 INCIDENTS WERE IN CHUONGMNHIEN PROVINCE. THERE WERE 206 GVNPHLQTSYEX

A.

XVIGZTEFVESKCM #

SNHFM MCE7133 KILLED, 605

WOUNDED AND 55 MISSING. GVN CLAIMS 457 VC KILLED, 7 CAPTURED, AND 9 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS SEIZED. FOR AUGUST 5, MR 4 REPORTED 40 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES OF 17 KIGXDEFBSLE CQNE

UZI #

XPFQ

PHFIYVNNBKLFTXTQ 60 KILLED, 8 CAPTURED, ONE SUSPECT DETAINED. 17 OF THE 40 INCIDENTS WERE IN CHUONG THIEN, CONCENTRATED IN THE NORTHEAST AND NORTHWEST CORNERS OF THE PROVINCE, WEST OF VI THANH CITY, AND IN THE BORDER AREA OF LONG MY AND KIEN THIEN DISTRICTS NORTH OF THE BA XUYEN BORDER.

2. THE GVN IS CONSIDERING MOVING THE ELEMENTS OF THE 4TH AIR DIVISION PRESENTLY AT SOC TRANG AIRFIELD TO CAN THO TO CONSOLIDATE LOGISTICS OPERATIONS AND FREE SOME 2000 PERSONNEL FOR OTHER TASKS.

3. SELECTED PROVINCE COMMENT: (A) AN GIANG, AN XUYEN, AND

CHAU DOC PROVINCES REPORTED LARGE SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS BY GVN
UNITS AND MILITARY POLICE TO ROUND UP DRAFT DODGERS AND DESERTERS.
SIMILAR OPERATIONS IN PHONG DINH AND DINH TUONG PROVINCES,

NOTE BY OC/T: SAIGON 14159 (2/3) # OMISSIONS - CORRECTIONS
TO FOLLOW.

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

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ORM-01 /094 W
----- 015955

O R 061135Z AUG 73
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5596
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
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AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
CINCPAC
CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE
USDAO SAIGON
USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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LIMDIS

HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN LARGELY UNSUCCESSFUL. THE CHAU DOC
PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS THAT THE GVN CRACKDOWN ON THE
"GOLDEN CRAB" HOA HAO BANDIT GANG HAS NOW DEVELOPED INTO A MORE

GENERAL ROUND-UP OF DRAFT DODGERS AND DESERTERS. THESE OPERATIONS SHOW INCREASED GVN DETERMINATION TO DEAL WITH DRAFT EVASION. IT IS ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY THAT THESE OPERATIONS ARE BEING CONDUCTED IN HOA HAO VILLAGE, DEMONSTRATING GVN RESOLVE TO ENTER
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EVEN THE MOST POLITICAL SENSITIVE AREAS.

4. THE KIEN HOA PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS THE LOWEST LEVEL OF INCIDENTS IN JULY FOR ANY MONTH SINCE JANUARY. THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF NEW VC/NVA UNITS OR OF INFILTRATION. OF 240 INCIDENTS OF ALL TYPES IN JULY, 183 RESULTED FROM GVN OPERATIONS. GVN UNITS ARE MAINTAINING PRESSURE ON THE VC, CLEARING MINIBASE AREAS AND ATTEMPTING TO OPEN LONG-NEGLECTED ROUTES INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE. SOME 65 HOI CHANH HAVE RALLIED TO THE GVN SINCE CEASE-FIRE II. MORALE, DISCIPLINE, AND SUPPORT OF GVN FIELD UNITS ARE REPORTED TO BE HIGH. ONE RF BATTALION HAS RETURNED TO GO CONG PROVINCE, LEAVING THREE GO CONG RF BATTALIONS IN KIEN HOA, IN SUPPORT OF THE ELEVEN LOCAL BATTALIONS.

5. IN ELABORATION OF THE COMPARATIVE PHONG DINH INCIDENT FIGURES (400 SO FAR THIS YEAR VERSUS 155 TO DATE LAST YEAR) REPORTED IN THE AUGUST 4 SITREP (CAN THO 0627), IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT (A) THE BULK OF THE MORE SERIOUS INCIDENTS OCCURRED AROUND THE TIME OF THE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE (E.G., OUT OF 108 GROUND ATTACKS THROUGH JULY, 62 OCCURRED IN JANUARY - FEBRUARY), (B) SOME INCIDENTS WITHIN PHONG DINH PROVINCE ARE SIMPLY SPILL-OVER FROM ACTIVITY IN CHUONG THIEN AND (C) ALTHOUGH THE 1972 PERIOD IN QUESTION INCLUDED THE NVA SPRING OFFENSIVE, FIGHTING IN THE DELTA THEN WAS MINIMAL AND CONCENTRATED IN DINH TUONG AND CHUONG THIEN PROVINCES. ACCORDINGLY, WE ATTACH UNUSUAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THE PHONG DINH FIGURES.
MARTIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON14159
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS MARTIN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730855/aaaabopy.tel
Line Count: 422
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <26-Nov-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITREP CINCPAC FOR POLAD
TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005